

Report

Dinosaur National Monument

■ 1.0 Site Description

Dinosaur National Monument is a 210,000-acre park straddling the border between Colorado and Utah. About two-thirds of the Park is in Colorado. The Park has two visitor centers: the Monument Headquarters Visitor Center which is the center for information on the canyon country of the Park, and the Dinosaur Quarry Visitor Center, in the area of the Park where dinosaur bones can be seen. The Monument Headquarters Visitor Center is one mile east of Dinosaur, Colorado, just off U.S. 40. The Dinosaur Quarry Visitor Center is seven miles north of Jensen, Utah, on Utah State Highway 149. In 1938 the canyons of the Yampa and Green rivers were added to the Park, and are heavily used for river rafting trips. Other activities available at the Park include hiking, fishing, and mountain biking.

There are no public transportation services to the Park. There are two self-guided, auto tours following paved roads within the monument which take between one and four hours to complete. The Park has seven self-guided nature trails, and offers a series of ranger talks and guided walks during the summer.

The Park receives 450,000 visitors annually, about 50 percent of whom spend no more than two hours and typically visit the Quarry only. Visitation times for the other 50 percent vary widely – from one-half day to a week. July is the busiest month at the Park, and Fridays and Saturdays are the busiest days.

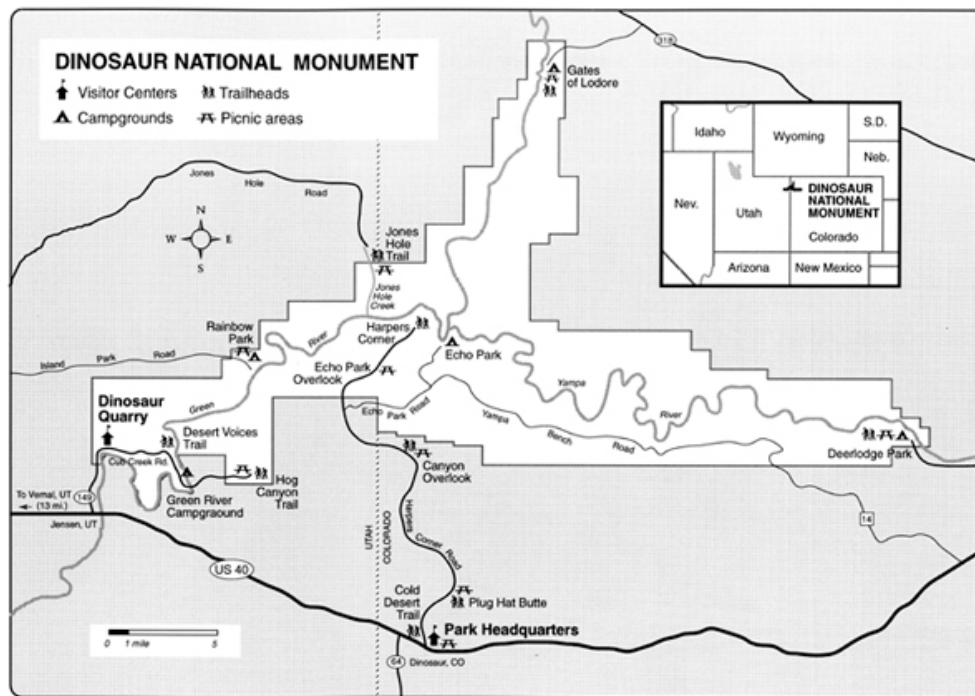
The Park's current General Management Plan does not make any recommendations regarding transportation. There are no congestion problems currently at the Park. Parking is always adequate at trailheads, overlooks, and visitor centers. The Split Mountain boat ramp on the Green River is crowded, (and plans are in place to expand it), but the parking area serving the boat ramp is adequate.

■ 2.0 Existing ATS

The Park currently has a shuttle system which transports visitors from the lower parking lot at the Dinosaur Quarry to the Dinosaur Quarry visitor center. The shuttle runs one-half mile on a two-lane paved road up a hill to the Quarry, then turns around. A shuttle bus leaves either the upper or lower lot every 10 to 15 minutes. The shuttle service runs only in the summer, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, but is necessary because the parking lot at the Quarry is not adequate to accommodate the number of summer visitors, and the parking lot at the Quarry can not be expanded. Approximately 95 percent of the

visitors to the Quarry, between 200,000 and 250,000 visitors each year, take this bus. The shuttle service is run by an outside contractor who also provides maintenance for the two shuttles, each of which has two cars. The contract amount was approximately \$80,000 to \$100,000 per year. The bus shuttles are open vehicles with no windows or glass, and bench seats across the vehicle with no middle aisle. The vehicle is loaded from the side. The bus can tow a trailer with more benches when needed. The contractor also provides drivers for the shuttle buses. The shuttle service is very necessary; without it the Quarry parking lot would be overflowing each day during the summer. However, the current service is adequately meeting the needs of the Park at this time, with the exception of the need to transport special needs passengers in wheelchairs. The vehicles are not ADA compliant, so visitors in wheelchairs must drive up the hill to the Quarry and park in the upper parking lot.

Figure 1. Dinosaur National Monument



■ 3.0 ATS Needs

The Park's needs are currently being met by its existing Alternative Transportation System (ATS).

■ 4.0 Basis of ATS Needs

The Park's needs are currently being met by its existing ATS.

■ 5.0 Bibliography

Dinosaur National Monument. Internet site: <http://www.nps.gov/dino/>. Information printed November 1999.

■ 6.0 Persons Interviewed

Denis L. Ditmanson, Superintendent, telephone interview, November 1999